National-Socialist Press Policy

Address Delivered by

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It is with great pleasure that I have accepted Herr Rosenberg's invitation to give you a brief sketch of the essence and aims of National-Socialist Press policy. I am very grateful for the opportunity thus afforded me to deal with the question of the Press—one which has today assumed a previously unparalleled importance—before an audience which is particularly appreciative of this problem.

I speak of a previously unparalleled importance, for within the last generation or so a new and important problem in international affairs has added itself to those which the nations are called upon to face. The problem of the Press has, of course, for many years been one of the most interesting of social phenomena and one of the most important questions in international relations; but never before have its effects been so immediate and its influence on international affairs so great as at the present day.

A few days ago the Führer found it necessary to single out for special attention in his speech to the Reichstag this problem, the importance of which in international life is ever increasing. In this speech, which aroused so much interest all over the world, he showed quite frankly, and as clearly as could be wished, the results and dangers of the destructive type of Press work which is today concerned with, and influences, international relations in so disastrous a manner. In so doing he drew the attention of the nations to the fact that the Press is a political problem of world importance—and who had more cause to do so than he? The Führer's indictment which was, unfortunately, only too well founded, showed up relentlessly the negative side of the work of the

international Press. Perhaps it may be that many who listened to this speech realized then, for the first time, the extent to which the Press has within the last generation or so become an element in international relations. More than at any time in the past, Press policy is today an important part of politics, both national and international. Thus in dealing with this question in detail today and in attempting a comprehensive sketch from the journalist's point of view, I feel that I am not unjustified in asking your attention.

The Press is one of those phenomena of which one can say that it is its shortcomings which attract the greater attention. Perhaps there are today still men who honestly feel that it is one of the greatest misfortunes which has ever descended upon mankind. Admittedly, we could live without it, and perhaps we would even be happier. But our age has, unfortunately, made too much progress for so simple an existence. Today the Press is one of the most important functions in modern life, and the life the nations lead would be unthinkable without it. It flashes news of everyday events across time and space. It is the Press which day by day and hour by hour brings home to man what is going on around him outside his own immediate circle. The Newspaper is the mirror of the age, and the Press is always at the focal point of events. Men call it the expression of public opinion, the voice of the nations, the eye and ear of the world. In asking in how far it fulfils this, the high task which has been allotted to it, we touch upon the problem of the Press in our age. But whatever the answer be, one thing is sure, the Press is an important element in international life. It creates the atmosphere, be it good or bad, in which the statesmen must work. It is the pace-maker in international affairs and, so to speak, prepares the way for diplomatic action. Thus it is not entirely pointless that our guests this evening should comprise both diplomats and journalists.

German Press policy still meets with a certain amount of misunderstanding in the outside world. But I am convinced

that if it is properly understood, it is capable of banishing those terrible results which were, perhaps, originally brought into being by a misunderstood conception of the Press.

It is, of course, quite clear that no one is capable of appreciating either the structure of our Press nor yet the nature of our Press policy, if he is ignorant of the intellectual basis of National Socialism, of the new way of thinking that has found its expression therein, of the new conception of the State which it embodies, and of the relations of the individual to the community, which have given to its social existence a completely new basis, to our way of thinking new knowledge and conceptions. In other connections I have often before dealt with this revolution in the German nation's way of thinking, which National Socialism has accomplished.

I have shown how National Socialism has in individualistic thinking overcome the intellectual fault of a whole epoch, and how it has replaced it by means of a way of thinking which is conscious of the community. In this way we travel along completely new roads of knowledge and open up the way to developments which those outside, whose life is subject to absolutely different conceptions, simply do not see. The conceptions which foreigners make use of in their thought, and which are quite naturally valid in their countries, are often insufficient to enable people to follow in an unprejudiced manner, and to feel sympathy for, what is taking place in Germany. We stand here—I should like to suggest—at the parting of two ways of thinking. And this is, in the last resort, the source of all difficulties and lack of understanding which we so often have to face nowadays in the discussion of international affairs. Thinking along liberalistic lines can never lead to an understanding of the National-Socialist way of acting. Only he who is possessed by this new communal way of thinking, or at any rate is at pains to understand it, understands National-Socialism, its age, its values, its language and its voice.

What I say here of the advance in the formulation of conceptions, which has in the last few years in Germany carried through a revolution in the way of thinking, is of particular application to the Press. When one examines the ideas on which criticism of the National-Socialist Press is based, and considers the out-of-date and no longer applicable standards which are here applied, one scarcely wonders at the misunderstandings and hostility with which the National-Socialist conception of the Press meets at the hands of so many foreigners. Granted, the Press has in its development been a child of liberalism; but that is no reason why the Press of the liberalistic age should be taken to represent the concept Press. In the National-Socialist State the conception of the Newspaper is fundamentally different to that with which so many of us have, under the influence of a liberalistic ideology, grown up. A new epoch sets the Press new tasks. The essence of the liberalistic Press is to be found in the fact that it feels itself called to give expression to the criticism or opinion of individuals concerning the State and its organs. The individual contributor, whether he be a professional journalist or not, stands here as the spokesman of so-called public opinion, without having any justification to act as such apart from his own presumption or his private opinion. This is in keeping with the basic conceptions of individualistic thought. The National-Socialist idea of the community on the other hand, however, sets the Press a fundamentally different task, namely that of emphasizing the basic fundamentals of community life as opposed to the individual. The German nation has learnt that the expression "stick together" is the most valuable thing in its treasuries.

The National-Socialist Party, that great movement for the regeneration of the German nation, has learnt from its own history that a uniform line of political thinking on the part of the whole people is the basis of all national and socialist success, and that it is only knowledge of the common problems of fate that arouses the will to solve them. It sees in this

knowledge of the common problems of fate an element of power, and in the Press one of the most powerful means of serving such knowledge.

In the National-Socialist State it is not the task of the Press to give expression to the opinion of the individual as opposed to the community, or to proclaim as "public opinion" something which is far from being so. Its task is, on the contrary, continually to bring before the individual the questions of their common destiny and, if he is not conscious of them, to make them clear to him. In so doing the Newspaper becomes the daily admonisher of the nation, the school of political thinking, which makes each single citizen conscious of the fact that he is a member of a community to which he is bound for better or for worse. Our definition of public opinion is not to be found in that hovering barometer of the moods of bad-tempered publicists, which is daily and hourly subject to the manifold influences of uncontrollable private interests, but rather in the genuine will of the people, with which National-Socialism, thanks to its lively connection with the nation, comes into contact at the very source. In this country we do not make public opinion, we find out what it is! In this country the newspaper is not the happy hunting ground of the irresponsibility and the unbridled criticism of a few persons, the representatives of anonymous interests, who misuse the right to criticize to undermine the authority of the State. In this country, where we have better ways of maintaining close connection between the State and the people, the Newspaper is the public conscience of the nation, but its function is to help the State, not to hinder it. This is a conception of the Press completely different to that held by liberalism, and one, too, which is, we are convinced, the better.

In the face of such a completely different conception of the Press, the arguments which our foreign critics have hitherto produced prove themselves to be fruitless. They com-

pletely miss the point, for they are taken from the vocabulary of a liberalistic intellectual attitude, the concepts of which are no longer applicable to our age and to our modern conception of the duties of the Press. The German Press, too, makes so free as to criticize, but it criticizes not what is of service to the nation, but that which is harmful. Within the natural limits set by the interests of the nation it possesses, in the last resort, far more freedom than the liberalistic Press has ever done. It even makes so free as to criticize that very "freedom of the Press", the praises of which are sung to us with all the passion of which democracy is capable as one of the holiest of mankind's possessions; but not even the freest of liberalistic pens dares to touch the so-called "freedom of the Press". And our colleagues who sit at editor's desks in "the freest democracies on earth" know perfectly well the reason for this; such a painful frankness would involve them in a most unwished—for change of occupation.

With the aid of references to the history of journalism in many countries I have recently demonstrated what the freedom of the Press really amounts to. With the help of historical facts and actual printed material I have shown that the freedom of the Press is in fact one of the emptiest phrases which have ever befogged the brain of man. With the aid of the incontestable evidence of men who themselves profess that their own countries enjoy the freedom of the Press, I have shown that from the very first day of the origin of the Press until the present time, there has never, in any place, existed any freedom of the Press, that where it was most loudly praised, it was most lamentable, that it is a case of one of the worst falsifications of meaning ever known to history.

In my pamphlet I quoted numerous indictments by a misused profession of the spiritual slavery to which the liberalistic Press is subjected; of these I chose to repeat now but one, one which is particularly clear.

In 1913 John Swinton publicly declared at the annual conference of the American Press Association that apart from the papers in small country towns there was no independent Press in America. Everyone was well aware that nobody would dare to express his opinion on that subject, and that even if they were to do so it would never get into print. Any man so foolish as to write what he really thought would soon find himself on the streets. The duty of a New York journalist was to tell lies and to bow down in the temple of Mammon. For the sake of his daily bread he had to sell his people and his country. Journalists were the tools and vassals of rich men behind the scenes, mere marionettes who had to dance as the strings were pulled. Their time, talents, life and abilities belonged to those men. Journalists were intellectual prostitutes. — A harsh and drastic judgment which was delivered twenty-five years ago. Since then conditions have become no better.

There recently appeared in New York a book entitled *The Washington Correspondents,* which contains some very interesting passages in this connection. It is compiled from replies to a *questionnaire* dispatched to several hundred journalists. The most frequent reply to the question, "How free is a newspaperman to write up the news as he honestly sees and understands it?" was "Everyone knows they have to write what the publishers want", or "They'd be fired if they didn't cater to their home offices".

In one passage the author, Leo C. Rosten, states: "In a society where 'freedom of choice' is a pretty concept delimited by economic reality, a clear conscience is a luxury confined to those with the economic means to refuse compromises with personal ideals".

This book, which, mark you, was written not in Germany but in the United States, might well be recommended to all those who feel entitled to reproach us with having no freedom of the Press. One might also read a sensational indictment

of the American Press by Ferdinand Lundberg, which recently appeared, likewise in New York, under the title of *America's Sixty Families,* especially the chapter entitled *The Press of the Plutocracy,* which shows only too clearly what the "freedom of the Press" really means. The freedom of the Press is a phantom, a mere placard meant for harmless spirits! Nowhere in the world has there been, is there today, any such thing. The world should possess enough feeling for reality to admit that to us. The Press is always dependent, is always subject to someone. The only question is to whom. To irresponsible business interests and party politics, to the anonymous powers of money and the destruction of all human order and morale, or to the statesmen who are responsible for the life of the peoples and to the authorities of the nation.

In 1933 when we began our work of building up the National-Socialist State and found ourselves faced with an absolutely chaotic state of affairs in Press matters, we were forced to ask ourselves this question. We chose the latter of the two alternatives, and lost no time in putting it into practice. The cleansing of the Press in Germany was, so to speak, the announcement that we had arrived, while its reformation was, may I say, the first fruits of the National-Socialist revolution.

If it had not been for the fact that the National-Socialist Party had, at the cost of the greatest sacrifices and pains, built up its own organs, which for years waged an uncompromising struggle against the old conditions, the respect in which the people held the Newspaper would have probably vanished for ever. It was necessary by means of legislation to create order in this chaos which we had inherited. The Journalists' Law was proclaimed as early as the 4 October, 1933, and came into force at the beginning of the following year.

The new structure of the German Press is clear and simple. Acting in the true National-Socialist spirit the Journalists'

Law has shifted the responsibility for the contents of a paper from things to persons. It has made perfectly clear on whom rests the responsibility for the intellectual and political contents of a paper. It is in accordance with the principle that the individual is responsible in everything to the whole nation that those people who write in the Newspaper and make public opinion should likewise be responsible to the State and to the public for what they do. It is in accordance with the German sense of right, in distinction to the concepts of the liberalistic system, that the man who settles the intellectual contents of a paper according to his will, or who edits the contributions of others and decides whether they be accepted or not, should take full responsibility for this as well. Thus the asocial principle of anonymity was done away with. The National-Socialist Press Law placed the German journalist in direct relationship to people and State, to whom he is thus in his intellectual work responsible, in addition to his own conscience. In return for this, the legislation of the State secures for him that independence necessary for the fulfillment of his tasks and duties, that independence of corrupt influences to which he, the weaker economic vessel, could till then offer but insufficient resistance.

The form taken by Press legislation dealing with individuals proved the basis of the new position enjoyed by journalism in National-Socialist Germany. It has further resulted in a basic change in the community and social position of the German journalist.

It is a grave error to think that we wish Germany to have merely a soulless State Press, with editors who are but the creatures of the organs of the State. Far from it! What we really wish is a living national Press which gives free play to the personality of the journalist, one in which his professional feeling of duty leads to creative development for the well-being of his nation.

At the same time the German Press knows perfectly well that it has still more to do. Such a fundamental change-over

in personnel as that undertaken by us needs time to become fully acquainted with all that is required of it. The fact that we had to deal with this by legislative measures was an unavoidable necessity. As a result of the radical separation of business from politics which was carried through by the Journalists' Law, we now have the necessary basis for the recovery of our Press. For this piece of legislation called to life within the breast of every German journalist the deeper law of that higher form of the freedom of the Press which marks out journalism as a calling raised by the responsibility it bears towards the nation high above many others.

It is in this that we see the internal power and the national importance of the Press. But in addition there is also its international power and importance, which makes it a weighty factor in international relations, as I pointed out at the beginning of my address. And I feel sure that I am justified in taking for granted that the audience to which I am speaking today is one which takes an especial interest in this far reaching problem.

The Press, as I have already said, is a power in the life of the nations which is greater than the bourgeois wisdom of many of our contemporaries allows them to dream. It used to be called the seventh Great Power, but I feel that in the course of the last twenty years it has raised itself a few places higher. For just as the nations have become nearer to one another as a result of modern transport and communications, so too, and to a like degree, have moods and changes in temperament, political atmospheres and political reactions within the individual nations, become of far greater importance for the decisions taken by the great powers in the sphere of international relations. It takes but a few hours today for the wires of the Press to forward from country to country the real or alleged attitude adopted by the various peoples to every event of importance. There is no point in interjecting, yes, but the broadcasting services do that even

more quickly; for they simply reproduce what the press has to say, which is regarded as the barometer of public opinion, the voice of the nations—whether it be so in reality or not. The reason why the Press is regarded as public opinion is that it exercises the strongest influence over it. For this reason it may well be called the barometer of the world, for its rise and fall has undoubtedly exercised a stronger and more immediate influence on the decisions of many cabinets in the last few generations than many are willing to admit.

But this same power—one of the most influential means of leadership at the present time—with which the Press has been entrusted stands between good and evil, and contains possibilities which are capable of development to the good or ill of the relations between the various nations. It was for this reason that a French diplomat once so justifiably called it the tongue, which, as Aesop says, is both the best and the worst. But till now, unfortunately, in international relations it has always been the bad tongue, rather than the good powers, of the Press, which has proved more influential. How often has not public opinion been poisoned by means of lies and irresponsible sensationalism, with the result that the gravest dangers for the peace of the world have thus been conjured up. In the course of his recent speech before the Reichstag the Führer pointed to this running sore in international life. He gave an answer to the agitators and poisoners of the springs of international amity and proclaimed to the governments of the world that it would be a splendid achievement if they were to succeed in preventing, not merely the use of gas, incendiary and explosive bombs throughout the world, but also, and above all, the circulation of those papers whose effect upon international relations is far worse than any damage ever done by gas or incendiary bombs. In my speech at the last Party Congress at Nuremberg I showed with the aid of actual publications how unprincipled work on the part of the Press hat succeeded in sowing hatred between peace-loving nations, and in letting loose the dogs of war. And I

may tell you that no serious voice has so far been raised, which has succeeded in disproving this indictment. Admittedly I did find in a few foreign papers the bare statement —without any supporting evidence however—that I was an "unusual Press surgeon", or that my speech was an example of "Nazi mentality". That is what appeared in the newspapers. But on the other hand I have received numerous personal letters from journalists agreeing with my statements,—which in my eyes goes to prove how much my words meant to all decent journalists who live under the compulsion of circumstances. The case, moreover, is just the same with many democratic statesmen. They have long ago recognized the problem which oppresses them, but do not dare to tackle it. The very "freedom of the Press" they enjoy forbids them, I might almost say under pain of death, to tackle this problem. And in the fact that all those who have the possibility of changing this state of affairs are compelled by reason of their political and parliamentary dependence on the Press to keep silent, lies the tragic difficulty which stands in the way of the solution of this in itself so simple problem. And though in other matters political life prefers to conduct all business at the top of its voice, concerning these there prevails in the forest of the Press a silence comparable to that in a Trappist monastery. Till now it is only the leaders of the authoritarian states who have raised their voices against this condition of affairs.

Thus only a few days ago Signor Mussolini, the head of the Italian Government, pointed out to the president of the international publishers' organization how widespread is the evil of tendencious reporting. All these inaccurate and untrue Press reports, he said, create a state of mind which is disquieting, one which, in the interests of peace, it is the duty of all nations to help do away with.

How much the importance of this problem has been recognized even in the parliamentary democracies is indicated by

the cautious but unequivocal statements of many of their responsible statesmen.

Thus for instance, M. Lebrun addressing the Annual Congress of the French Republican Journalists' Association on the 8 February, warned French journalists, in all seriousness, against abuse of the so-called freedom of the Press. It is a good thing, he said, to be allowed freedom to say everything with the necessary restraint and good breeding, but such freedom becomes extremely dangerous when the writer permits himself to be carried away by feelings of hate and by ill-considered impetuosity. French journalists must bear in mind the different methods of Press policy employed in various countries. On the one hand, everything functions smoothly like the harmonizing of some orchestral work by a conductor skilled in avoiding discord and wrong interpretation. This gives the impression of much greater unity and a stronger national will. It is a strength that can only benefit the country. And then, on the other hand, there are countries where the spirit of criticism has developed abnormally; where unrestrained licence is permitted to all. Where this the case, there is a danger of exaggerated individualism compromising everything, thus dealing the deathblow to the desired effects. It is of vital importance to bear in mind the regrettable results of thoughtless or even of wilful misrepresentation of facts when imparting information, which might tend to endanger the concord between nations—more than ever necessary today—and the peace so eagerly desired by all.

At a luncheon of the Foreign Press Association in Paris, M. Delbos, the French Foreign Minister, decried the custom of publishing false or tendencious news, and declared it to be the duty of Press representatives in every country to cooperate in suppressing this feverish activity. The Press ought to promote appeasement and concord between the nations rather than encourage dissension among them.

And no other than M. Herriot himself, to quote the *Temps* of the 16 April, 1938, calls for legislation to deal with the mischief-making Press. "It is intolerable", he said, "that in a "respectable country like ours, there is no penalty for the "propagation of lies. Two points, at least, must therefore be "considered in this proposed legislation, namely, the compuls- "ory signing of every article, and the prevention of the misuse "of the responsible editor, for I think it only right, and indeed "imperative, to make both the director of the newspaper and "the author of the article responsible for what has been "written."

M. Benesh, the Czechoslovak President, according to the *Prager Presse* of the 21 April, 1935, asked the following question: "Is it possible to overlook the fact that the morals "of our generation are being destroyed by a revolutionary, "demagogic and sensational Press that is not only open to "bribery but is governed by aims and views contrary to those "set forth by me?"

Mr. de Valera, the President of Eire, addressing the Irish Branch of the Institute of Journalists, supported the question as to whether the freedom of the Press should be restricted or not be saying that the phrase, "freedom of the Press", requires a rational interpretation; on no account should it be taken to mean the toleration of a power exempt from all responsibility. A very hazy idea of what is meant by "freedom of the Press" prevailed in many circles, and people propagated it with a confusion of mind to which in private life they would not dream of exposing their own children. The nation should be protected from the misuse of Press influence.

At the recent opening of the Austrian Press Exhibition, Dr. Schuschnigg, the Austrian Chancellor, stated that the world would be a happier place, and many would be grateful for the sparing of their nerves, if only journalists would take their responsibilities seriously and refuse to credit or publish any item of news for the sake of causing a sensation before testing its veracity.

Similar utterances have come from many other statesmen all over the world, to mention only the most recent by Dr. Meyer of the Swiss Federal Council, by Hr. Stauning, the Danish Minister of State, and by Mr. Eden, the former British Foreign Minister, who, in one of his last speeches at Geneva, said, cleverly and rather appropriately, that diplomatic successes had little news value, diplomatic failures, on the other hand, enjoyed considerable publicity which often lasted for a long time.

In one of the recent debates on foreign affairs, Mr. Chamberlain, the English Prime Minister, stated in the House of Commons: ..... "The power of the Press for good or for evil "in international relations is very great, and a judicious use "of that power, accompanied by a full sense of responsibility, "may have far-reaching effects in creating an atmosphere "favourable for the purposes at which we are aiming ....."

The British Prime Minister, in uttering this reminder, was doubtless thinking of the unfortunate role which a large section of the English Press played during the visit of Lord Halifax to Berchtesgaden and of the questionable service which it thus rendered to British diplomacy. And indeed, who can count the opportunities for understanding between the nations which have been wrecked by the brainless sensationalism of an irresponsible Press and the falsification manoeuvres of shady elements in recent years? The culpability in this respect is great, but it becomes enormous when one thinks what immense positive opportunities lie within the power of the Press, and what a blessing it could be to human society if it would only become aware of its responsibilities.

Imagine how peaceful the world would be if the newspapers not only wrote about peace but also kept peace themselves! The Press could actually work wonders in the political life of the nations. For twenty years, for example, a League of Nations has been busying itself with international relationships.

How many diplomatic efforts, how many meetings and conferences have been staged! The results are not merely small; they are lamentable. And is it not the disillusionment with the fruitlessness of these endeavours that has been the principal cause of the political defeatism which has taken possession of so many European countries? How differently the peoples could regard one another if they would recognize the importance of the Press and its possibilities for effecting an understanding collaboration, and would fully devote the positive power of the Press to this lofty purpose! I am not being utopian when I say that in an atmosphere of mutual respect and mutual understanding created by the Press they could in a few months achieve what they have not been able to accomplish by other methods in generations. From being so often a scourge to humanity by the dissemination of hatred and discord,—and unfortunately many elements in the Press have degenerated into this—the Press could become a unifying and benefical influence among the peoples of the world! The nations all desire peace; they wish to be on good terms with their neighbours. In so many countries, however, the Press, boasting as it does that it alone represents public opinion, prevents the realization of these wishes. Why is no attempt made to attain an international Press peace?—a question every man in the street has a right to ask. The nations have reached agreement about the smuggling of cocaine, the white slave traffic and the arrest of bank robbers, why should they not join in fighting political agitation and attempts to sabotage peace by irresponsible elements in the Press? I should like to ask this question today.

I am not unaware of the various difficulties which stand in the way of its solution. They rest not so much in the will of the peoples as in the organization and structure of the Press system. The Führer, in his Reichstag speech, made a few frank references to the objection that in other countries there is no legal possibility of putting an end to lies and calumny. In discussing this question in greater detail, I have

no intention of prescribing ways and means for you to carry out any desires or purposes which you may have. That is not our affair. But I may be permitted to point out that in Germany and Italy modern Press legislation has for the first time created the practical prerequisites for international Press cooperation. The structure of our Press organization, the basic lines of which I have described to you, opens up for the first time the prospect of an international Press policy which, if understood objectively and pursued without prejudice, may become a real blessing to all nations and to mankind. Whoever has once recognized these practical aims and possibilities is no less than in duty bound, in the interests of the nations and of peace, to strive for their realization on an international basis. And it is solely these ideas which are guiding German Press policy in its attempt, step by step through bilateral written or unwritten Press agreements between country and country, to clear the path for reason and understanding in the field of international journalism.

Germany's Press agreements with Poland and Austria serve this purpose, and on the occasion of the recent visit of the Yugoslavian Prime Minister we reached a gratifying gentlemen's agreement with Yugoslavia too as to reciprocal Press relationships. The close and friendly relations between the German and Italian peoples, I may also point out in this connection, are in no small degree a result of the attitude of the Press of the two countries, which over a period a years has established ties of friendship through mutual comradely visits which are now bearing such rich fruits for their two peoples.

German Press policy will continue along this path of non-aggression pacts and Press agreements between the countries, taking advantage of whatever political and journalistic opportunities present themselves. But there are limits to this, it must be said in this connection. Not limits to our goodwill, which is present, but limits to the chances for negotiation,

limits to Press morals which exist in other countries. Just as there can be no truce between two States, if one of them has a well disciplined army while the troops of the other are in the hands of *condottieri* waging war on their own account, there can be no peace in the Press, if only one portion of it obeys a national discipline while the other shirks all responsibility and is guided only by the anonymous influence of peace-destroying powers. The national discipline to which our Press has been educated by National-Socialist Press policy, and which it knows how to preserve, enables us to make such agreements and to respect them. What, however, is the state of affairs in other lands? Diplomatic protests against unqualifiable attacks on our nation and form of government are nearly always wont to be answered in the following almost stereotyped terms: "We agree that this is a mischievous lie or "a gross slander; we have no means, however, of interfering "effectually, since the freedom of our Press is safeguarded by "the Constitution."

Such excuses appear to us incredible even if viewed from the angle of democratic policy of the most liberalistic kind. What such an attitude defends in the way of freedom of the Press is not that at all but simply insolence of the Press. In citing its own constitution the State does not protect the freedom of its Press but simply the freedom to make mischief and to slander. M. Herriot was right in saying, "It is intoler- "able that in a respectable country like ours there is no "penalty for the propagation of lies". Here he has merely put into words, what every decent-minded man thinks in every country. There is no constitution which in the name of the nation could possibly protect such tendencious reporting. Here most obviously is a wrong interpretation of the universal rights of humanity. For every government has the power to take measures against agitators and slanderers who poison relations with other lands and in so doing prove a grave menace to the peace of their own nation. Is not the welfare of the nation and the security of the State the supreme

law of democracy? Wherever the interests of the nation are menaced in the most irresponsible manner by journalistic mischief-makers let every statesman claim the right to act in accordance with the written and unwritten laws of his constitution and to confiscate any edition of a newspaper guilty of such an act of sabotage. Countries in which such principles are not fully recognized—although to every self-respecting person they are a matter of course—cannot be regarded by us as fit partners for a Press agreement.

It has become a strange habit in other countries to make the German Government responsible for every word that is published in German newspapers, and to demand of the German Press a restraint bordering almost on self-renunciation, a self-renunciation which the foreign Press itself in its role of wrongly interpreted freedom does not feel the slightest obligation to emulate. This is by no means a fair form of speculating on our decency, and does not bring us one single step nearer a Press armistice. We have absolutely no intention of being the losers in these irresponsible Press attacks as a reward for our honest efforts. Henceforward if such attacks are not immediately suppressed by the government of the country in which they were perpetrated, we shall be forced to retaliate with the same weapons. That we are perfectly capable of plain speaking is a proven fact. We are convinced that this bad habit of fighting with unequal weapons will not serve the cause of international Press appeasement. We cannot afford to be peaceable angels when the devil is at our heels. Our motto in this case must be, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth". Even we can make our contribution to a Press peace only one move at a time. We cannot be expected to keep the arrows of our Press in the quiver when from all sides the mud-slingers are placed in operation against us. On this point there must be agreement among the statesmen of all countries who regard a Press peace as an indispensable prerequisite to a general political settlement. There is not much point in uttering solemn declarations of peace around

the conference table and at the same time giving the Press free rein to conduct campaigns of abuse.

We in Germany, as well as the Italians, through our Press reform and Press legislation have taken the first step towards a rational international Press policy and pointed the way to a cleansing of the international atmosphere. And in a number of other countries too common sense is beginning to prevail. We have realized that the moral crisis in which world journalism finds itself is due not so much to the journalists themselves as to their anonymous masters who prescribe their dealings from behind the scenes. We have drawn the logical conclusions to this; with our Journalists' Law we have liberated opinion from the invisible chains of lucre and placed journalists in a position of direct responsibility to the people and the State, without encroaching on the essentially private character of our newspaper enterprises. With this clear and sound solution we have set in order the journalistic profession in this country. It now lies with the others to follow us if they are serious in their desire for peace. How they do so is their own affair; we shall not interfere. National Socialism has its own conception both of foreign policy and of Press policy. Our political conviction is that the peace of the world can only be safeguarded by the existence of free, sovereign and prosperous states, just as our economic creed teaches us that a proper functioning of world economy is only possible if it is based on a sound national economy from which it can develop. Precisely the same may be said of our Press policy, governed as it is by the principle that only a morally and economically sound Press can guarantee international collaboration in the whole sphere of the Press.

The demolition of the barriers of incitement and slander which separate the peoples, a process which will be in the interests of all nations and serve the welfare of all peoples, can be hastened if the responsible statesmen in all countries will recognize the will of their peoples in this matter and find

the courage to implement it. The so-called "freedom of the Press" which they think they must respect, is a phantom "which has only as much power as the horror which it inspires". Thus wrote one of the leading European newspaper men in 1827; and today one should no longer refuse, for the sake of a meaningless slogan, to see things as they really are. The journalist, working hard at his profession, has long since recognized the real nature of this strange freedom of the Press which is to him no freedom. He is aware, to quote the words of an American, that the Press is free in theory but in practice this freedom has been destroyed by the power of money. Let statesmen realize this when they are afraid to take this jump. With the spurs of a good conscience and an appeal to the nations' eager desire for peace they will clear it! True freedom, if it is to be realized, is to be found, not in unbridled licence, but in responsibility. In responsibility to the community of one's own nation, and in responsibility to the comity of nations desirous of finding in the Press, not a mischief-making element which arouses hostility among the nations, but one whose mission is to be a unifying factor working for the promotion of peace.

Let all be conscious of this great responsibility, the heads of the Press as well as the journalists who write for newspapers at home or abroad. And especially do we hope that our useful collaboration with foreign correspondents in Germany will form the basis for friendly Press relations with other lands.

I have the impression that there is a certain amount of misunderstanding regarding our attitude towards the foreign journalists stationed in Berlin, so may I devote a few words to this matter? I have repeatedly expressed my conviction that journalistic fairness and national obligation are entirely compatible in the work of foreign journalists. This requires, however, a certain amount of psychology and comprehension of the situation and of conditions prevailing on both sides.

We consider the duties of the foreign correspondent to be the transmission to his countrymen of an unprejudiced and accurate picture of a foreign country and people. Anyone who conceives of his duties in this way may be certain of our assistance at all times, for we then respect him as the representative of an organ of public opinion in his country. We shall not dispute his right to objective criticism, if it is based on a determination to serve Truth. But anyone who cherishes feelings, of a personal nature or influenced by his own views, of aversion or even hatred towards the country which is his host, feelings which bring him into constant conflict with his professional duties and render difficult or impossible objective reporting, should not come to us as a correspondent. With his one-sided, tendencious reporting he injures not only our country but his own as well, and exposes himself to a continous and justified mistrust which must eventually come to a head. We are sensitive when we discover that a foreign journalist is opposing all efforts of politicians to bring about a good neighbourly relationship with other nations, through his own efforts to incite other nations against us by means of consistently unbalanced and deliberately tendencious reports of what is going on in Germany. In this case we made use of the weapon of expulsion, which incidentally, is not a National-Socialist invention, but one employed by all other nations, and which is directed against the journalist who has violated his professional obligations and abused the hospitality shown him as a guest of the country. We resort to such measures in cases like this and shall continue to do so in the future.

For the rest, we well understand the special conditions under which foreign journalists have to carry on their work here. We are not paltry-minded, neither may we be counted among those who think they have to look upon every foreign journalist as a cad, if he does not write exactly like a National-Socialist. We have to make due allowance for the fact that he was born and bred in another country, that he does not

think and feel about many things in the way we do, just as we expect a German abroad to remember he is a German. Of the foreign correspondent we simply demand adherence to truth and the honourable performance of his duty as a journalist. Like the diplomat in a foreign land he has to regard his mission from a higher point of view, that of responsibility for the maintenance of friendly relations between the nations.

It is perfectly true that a newspaper cannot be made without sensation. But do not the achievements of National-Socialism in so many spheres of work supply ample matter for sensational reporting? Why search so diligently for what is negative, when there is so much that is positive awaiting you? In exaggerating news for sensation's sake there is always a danger of slipping into error, and then it is but a step to listening all too eagerly to rumours, and the lapse into untruth is complete. I must draw your attention to this fact tonight.

And now, gentlemen of the foreign Press, if I were to anticipate your wishes, I know they begin and end with the cry for information. I am only too desirous of helping you to the best of my ability. You, however, must not ask the impossible. Each government is wont to supply the information it can give and which it deems most suitable. Thus it is a well-known fact that journalists in other lands feel irritated at these restrictions. One who has been a journalist himself understands this feeling perfectly and is desirous of helping you as far as possible.

This is what I wished to tell you today. I have done so *sine ira et studio* in a circle with whom my work in the future will bring me more frequently into contact than has hitherto been the case. If I have succeeded in directing your attention to the problem I have just discussed, and which I consider one of the most important of all political tasks confronting us as collaborators today, then the evening has fulfilled its purpose. And, gentlemen of the Diplomatic Corps, the interest

you have evinced in these questions is of the greatest importance for their solution. Bismarck's saying that each country will always have to pay for the windows its journalists break, still holds good. The broken pieces — gentlemen of the Diplomatic Corps — come within your provinee! And no less heartily, gentlemen of the Press, do I appreciate your presence here! I am now able to rehabilitate you in the eyes of the gentlemen of the Diplomatic Corps by quoting another of Bismarck's remarks about the Press, namely, "I could sooner make a good editor into an Under-Secretary of State for Foreign or Home Affairs than I can make a dozen government officials into one skilful and useful journalist." These words are still true today. And they probably would apply to you too, gentlemen of the foreign Press in Germany. I see in you and in your professional, comradely cooperation, a constructive rather than a destructive element to help in the realization of those aims of Press policy which have become one of the most urgent problems in international affairs.

In his Reichstag speech the Führer distinguished between two kinds of journalists. I shall be a happy man if I can always and without exception count you among those who know that they are serving their people best when they make ready the path of Truth. And I should therefore like to conclude with a quotation which perhaps best expresses the feelings which we have in working together with you, and which the journalist abroad should make the guiding principle of his labour, "Respect every man's country, and love your own!"

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